



**Homegrown Baltimore:  
Grow Local, Buy Local,  
Eat Local**

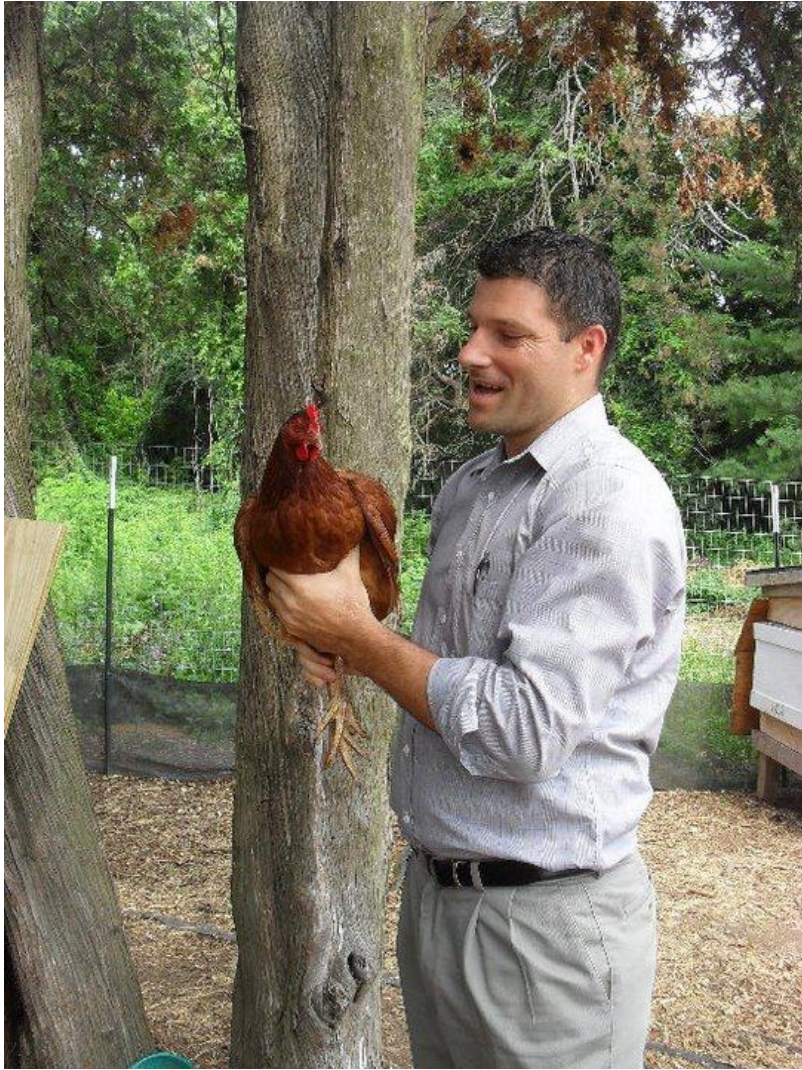
**What is the state of urban  
agriculture in Baltimore?**

















[www. BALTIMOREHONEY.org](http://www.BALTIMOREHONEY.org)

2010 baby bee nursery



...providing  
honeybee  
pollination for  
food security in  
Baltimore City

CSA -Micro-Local  
Natural Raw Honey

B'more Hon E™  
brand honey



**Where are we coming from  
at the governmental level?**





**Baltimore Office  
of Sustainability**  
People • Planet • Prosperity



# The Baltimore Sustainability Plan



# Plan Organization

1. **Cleanliness**
2. **Pollution Prevention**
3. **Resource Conservation**
4. **Greening**
5. **Transportation**
6. **Education & Awareness**
7. **Green Economy**

29 Goals

131 Strategies





# Cleanliness Goals

1. Eliminate litter throughout the City
2. Sustain a clean and maintained appearance of public land
3. **Transform vacant lots from liabilities to assets that provide social and environmental benefits**



# Education & Awareness Goals

1. Turn every school in Baltimore City into a green school
2. Ensure all city youth have access to environmental stewardship programs and information
3. **Raise the environmental awareness of the Baltimore community**
4. Expand access to informational resources on sustainability





# Green Economy Goals

1. Create green jobs and prepare city residents for these jobs
2. Make Baltimore a center for green business
3. Support local Baltimore businesses
4. Raise Baltimore's profile as a forward thinking, green city



# Greening Goals

1. Double Baltimore's Tree Canopy by 2037
2. **Establish Baltimore as a leader in sustainable, local food systems**
3. Provide safe, well-maintained public recreational space within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of all residents
4. Protect Baltimore's ecology and bio-diversity





# Baltimore Sustainability Plan

## Greening Goal #2: Establish Baltimore as a leader in sustainable, local food systems



- **Strategy A: Increase the percentage of land under cultivation for agricultural purposes**
- Strategy B: Improve the quantity and quality of food available at food outlets
- Strategy C: Increase demand for locally-produced, healthy foods by schools, institutions, super-markets and citizens
- **Strategy D: Develop an urban agriculture plan**
- **Strategy E: Implement Baltimore Food Policy Task Force recommendations related to sustainability and food**
- Strategy F: Compile local and regional data on various components of the food system

# Food Policy Recommendations

1. Promote and expand farmers markets
2. **Support urban agriculture**
3. Expand supermarket home delivery program
4. Develop a targeted marketing campaign to encourage healthy eating among all Baltimoreans
5. Support research on food deserts and collaboration with policy makers
6. Create healthy food zoning requirement or incentives
7. Improve the food environment around schools & recreation centers
8. Support street vending of healthy foods
9. Promote and expand community supported agriculture
10. Support a central kitchen model for schools



**What are we doing?**



# Zoning Code Rewrite



- **Community-Managed Open Space.** An open space area maintained by more than one (1) household that is used for the cultivation of fruits, flowers, vegetables or ornamental plants, or as a community gathering space for passive or active recreation, excluding playgrounds.
- **Urban Agriculture.** The cultivation, processing, and marketing of food within the City, which may or may not include the use of intensive production methods, structures for extended growing seasons, and on-site sale of produce. It may also involve animal husbandry, aquaculture, agro-forestry, vineyards and wineries, and horticulture. “Urban Agriculture” is characterized by a primary emphasis on income-generating agricultural activity and the operation of the farm as a business enterprise.

**Draft 2.0 is open for public comment: [www.rewritebaltimore.org](http://www.rewritebaltimore.org)**

# Updated Building Code

CCB #10-0593/Building, Fire, and Related Codes – 2010 Edition

Section 105.2 *Permits* shall not be required for the following:

10. Shade cloth OR PLASTIC FILM structures COMMONLY KNOWN AS “HOOPHOUSES,” constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems. THE COVERING OF THE STRUCTURE MUST BE A MATERIAL THAT CONFORMS TO NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION’S NFPA 701 STANDARDS.

# Other Ideas in the Works...

**Baltimore City Public Schools/Central Kitchen** – Create a central space for processing, commercial kitchen rental, food service education.



**Composting** – Identify site for central composting facility for local farm use.



**Animal Husbandry** – Review regulations and propose ways to encourage expanded roles for animals in Baltimore's local food systems (goats, aquaculture?).





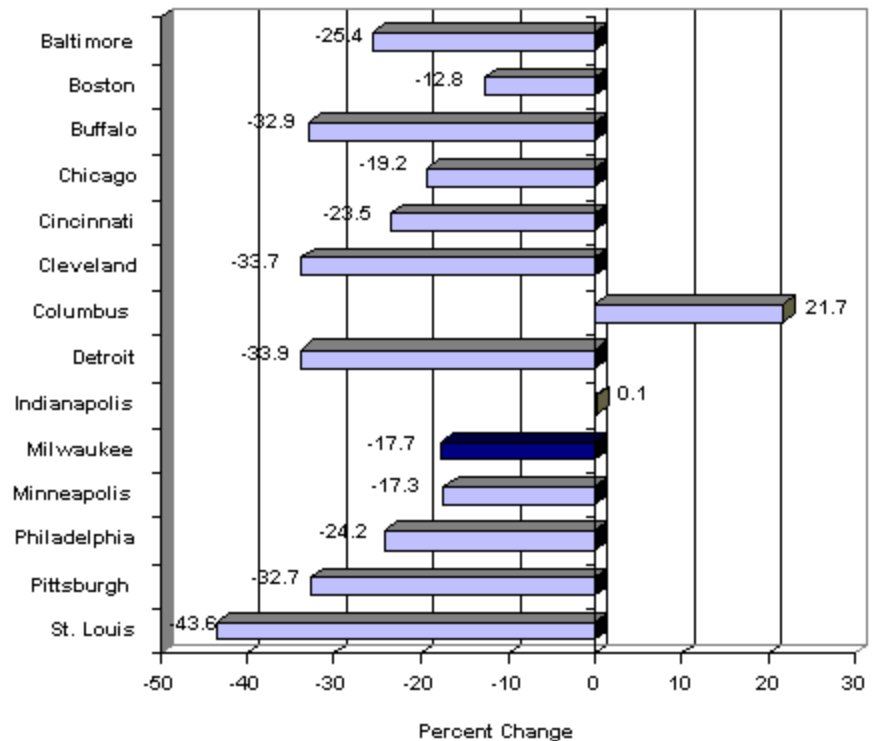
**What about land for  
farming?**

# Available Land

## “Shrinking Cities”

- Population loss and land abandonment has increased the number of sites potentially suitable for farming.
- Replace ‘growth based’ planning with ‘place based’ livable cities.

Figure 1.1 City Population Change (%) 1970 to 1996



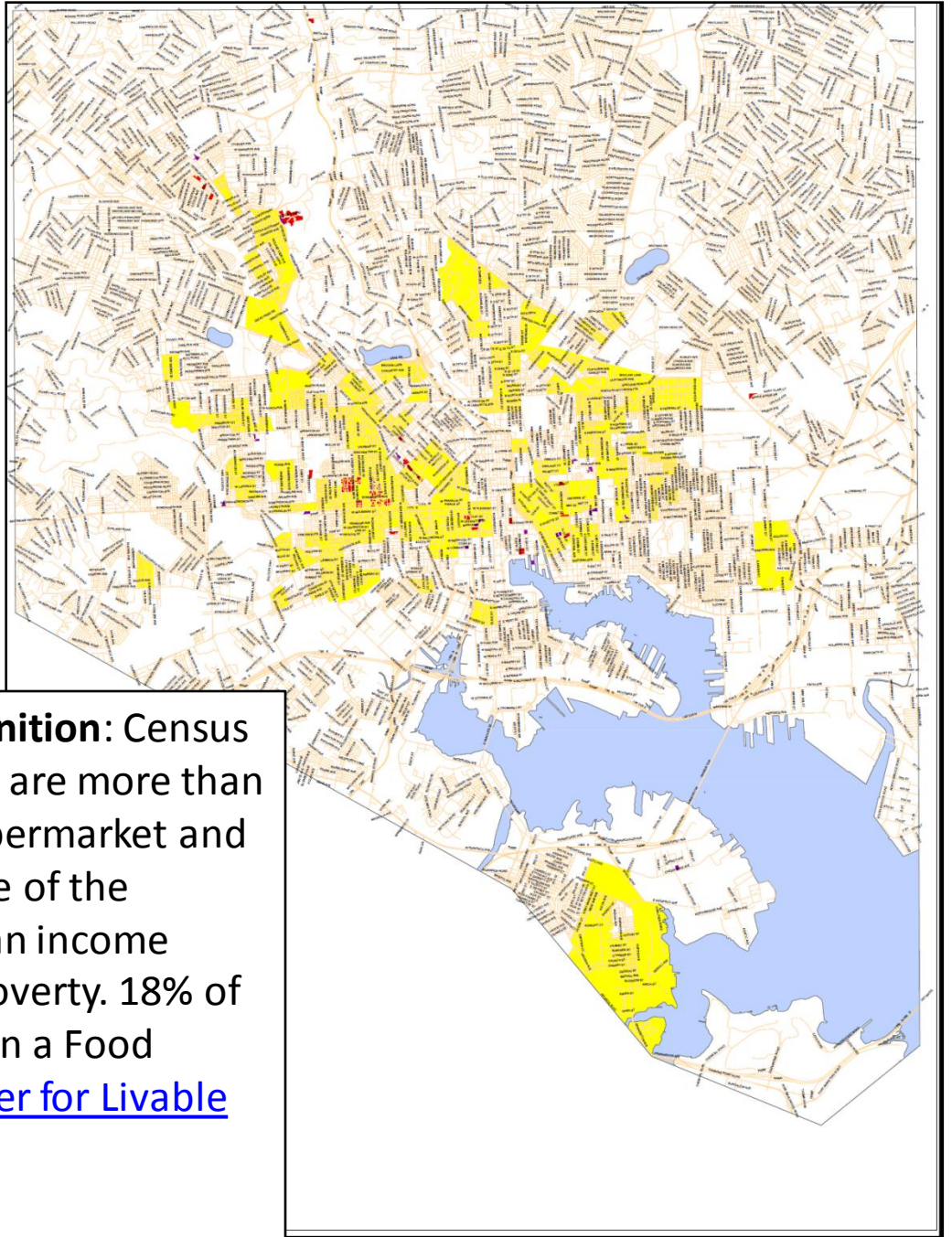




# Food Deserts

Many of Baltimore's citizens lack access to affordable, healthy food.

**Food Desert Definition:** Census block groups that are more than ¼ mile from a supermarket and have 40% or more of the population with an income below 125% of poverty. 18% of Baltimore City is in a Food Desert ([JHU Center for Livable Future 2009](#))



# ***Make Land Available for Farming***

## **Land Assessment**





# Assessment Process

- Started in summer 2010
- Utilized GIS database of Mayor & City Council owned property.
- Identified all sites 1 acre or greater, then culled out sites based on 'agronomic characteristics', economic development activity, community issues, food deserts, etc.



# What do urban farmers need for success?

## Summary of Agronomic Characteristics for Potential Sites

- **Size:** Minimum of 1 acre
- **Lease Agreement:** Minimum of 5 years (with 2 year termination notice)
- **Vehicle Access:** Daily sprinter vans and box trucks, Semi-Annual 18-wheelers
- **Shade Coverage:** Minimal shade coverage (around 95% clear)
- **Surface:** Any surface is farmable
- **Grade:** Less than a 5% grade
- **Sun Exposure:** South facing

# Assessment Process

- Started in summer 2010
- Utilized GIS database of Mayor & City Council owned property.
- Identified all sites 1 acre or greater, then culled out sites based on 'agronomic characteristics', economic development activity, community issues, food deserts, etc.
- **Initially identified more than 20 potential sites, 1 acre to 12 acres in size, totaling approximately 35 acres.**
- List of sites is currently undergoing revision and addition, park sites being added into consideration.



# Next Steps

2011

- Issue Request For Qualifications (RFQ) seeking 'qualified' farmers
- Select up to ten farmers
- Issue leases for the first 10 acres

*INTENT: Lease first 35 acres within 3 years*



# Why an RFQ?

- Find out who's out there
- Evaluate farmers using the same criteria for all
- Create a list of “qualified farmers” to begin leasing land
- Draw from list in upcoming years as more land is released

# Goals of the RFQ

- To **establish high-quality urban agricultural sites** that use sustainable farming practices, complement adjacent properties and utilize sound market strategies, understandings and principles.
- To **increase access** to healthy, affordable food particularly within food deserts in Baltimore City.
- To **improve environmental conditions** on and around vacant and/or abandoned land as a result of the urban agriculture taking place by the removal of litter, improvement of soil, and the recycling and composting of materials.
- To **provide additional benefits** to the surrounding communities, including improved aesthetics, stabilized or increased property values, job training and employment opportunities.
- To **provide financial returns** to the City including, but not limited to, incremental tax revenues.
- To **create opportunities** for Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises.

# Request for Qualifications

- Timeline:
  - RFQ Issuance: March 25, 2011
  - Pre-Submission Conference: April 8, 2011
  - Applications Due: May 6, 2011
  - Applicant Interviews: June 17, 2011
  - Notifications: July 25, 2011
- Qualifications: 1 year of experience, financially sound proposal
- Urban Farmer Request for Qualifications Application available at [www.baltimoresustainability.org](http://www.baltimoresustainability.org) but is currently closed
- Plan to re-issue as early as spring 2013





# What did we ask for?

- **Farmer Capacity**
  - *narrative statement, resumes, financial information, LOI from an insurance company*
- **Urban Agriculture Concept**
  - *narrative, timeline, proposed design, list of community benefits*
- **Cost Estimate and Economic Feasibility**
  - *narrative, budget, sources of funding*
- **MBE/WBE Participation**
  - *status of the applicant, status of any current partners/consultants/employees, plans to maximize participation*

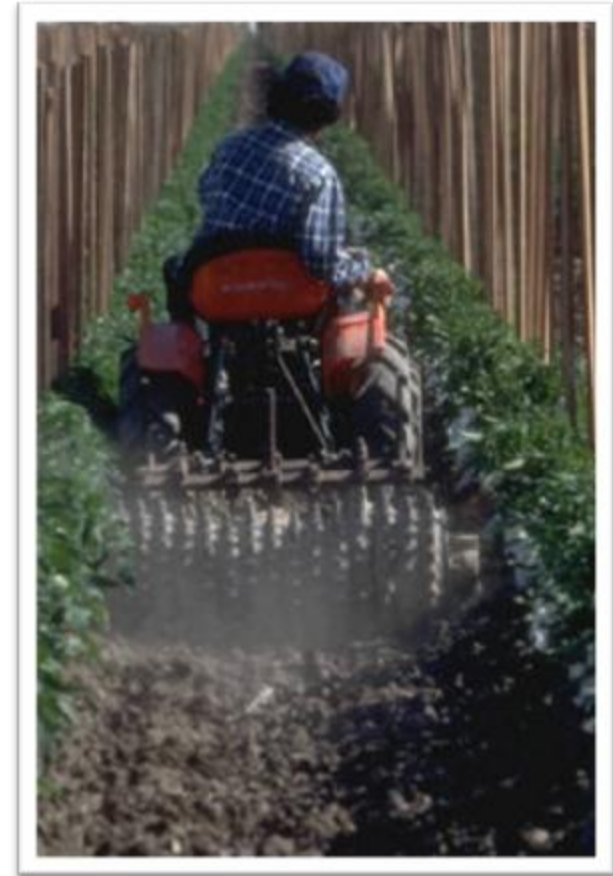
# Conditions

- Create soil barrier with raised beds or plan to clean up site per MDE regulations
- Use sustainable agriculture practices
- Community involvement
- Financial obligations- (e.g. permit fees)



# Terms & Finances

- 5-year leases (with 2-year notice to vacant), terms based on farm type
- Rate of \$100/year
- No taxes on non-profit farms
- For-profit farms may be eligible for tax breaks
- Funding will be available to help with initial capital costs





# Results and Next Steps

- Received 10 responses
- 5 respondents were selected for qualification – 3 for-profits, 1 non-profit and 1 benefits corporation
- Aiming to begin farming operations this spring
- Starting up a farmer training program with Future Harvest-CASA

